



News Release

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

The Idaho Water Center, 322 E. Front St., Boise, ID - TEL: (208) 287-4800 FAX: (208) 287-6700
www.idwr.idaho.gov

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Water Supply Committee: Outlook is Grim

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For Media Information Contact:
Michael Keckler – (208) 287-4828

If current weather patterns continue, the 2005 water year could be one of the worst on record. That was the conclusion of the Idaho Water Supply Committee after meeting Thursday at the Idaho Water Center in Boise.

The committee is made up of hydrology experts both from the public and private sector. Some of the highlights from the meeting include:

- Snow measurements in pockets of the Clearwater and St. Joe basins are the lowest ever recorded.
- In Boise, the first three months of the year are shaping up to be the driest start of any year on record.
- The Upper Snake River reservoir system may only reach 60% of capacity this year.
- The Inflow to Brownlee Reservoir is expected to be just 30% of normal.
- The Treasure Valley's New York Canal could be shut off two months early by mid to late August.
- Recreationists could see their favorite reservoirs drawn down much earlier than usual but low river flows could mean longer seasons for river recreation.

The only good news to come out in the meeting involves the Bear River Basin in Southeastern Idaho, which after years of severe drought, has snow packs that are normal and slightly above normal.

The Water Supply Committee will meeting again on April 13th to compare final numbers after Idaho's snow accumulation season ends on April 1.

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